



# MARTY BLOCK

Assemblymember - Seventy-Eighth District

California Legislature

## 2011 LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS *SIGNED BY GOVERNOR BROWN*

### *Public Safety*

#### **AB 648: Sentencing Commutation**

AB 648 requires the applicant for a commutation to notify the District Attorney 10 days before the Governor acts. The District Attorney would then notify the victim and/or their family, allowing both parties an opportunity to submit a recommendation for or against the commutation. The bill would strengthen transparency and oversight by requiring the Governor to submit an annual public report on the pardons and commutations granted in writing to the legislature, including copies of any application requests that were granted. The report shall also be made available to the public.

### *Military and Veterans Affairs*

#### **AB 188: Disabled Veterans – Property Tax Exemption**

AB 188 would make a 100% disabled veterans' property tax exemption available to the surviving spouse of a disabled veteran or service member killed on active duty, allowing them to continue to receive the property tax exemption (up to a described level) on their home, even if they need to enter an assisted living facility.

#### **AB 713: National Guard Legal Benefits**

AB 713 will provide significant financial protections for our service members who are deployed multiple times. Under current law, service members who demonstrate a hardship can defer or reduce loan repayments and request mitigation of various other financial burdens during the period of time they are on full-time active duty. If they return to civilian life and are deployed again, they are unable to defer or reduce that same loan because it was deferred previously. AB 713 remedies this situation by clarifying that a service member's obligation or liability must have been incurred prior to their current order for military service. It also applies to their spouse and legal dependents. Such changes will provide financial assistance and support for all of our Service members and their families.

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### *Higher Education*

**AB 620: Preventing Bullying, Promoting Safety for LGBT Students in Higher Education**

AB 620 improves the campus climate for LGBT students at public colleges and universities by improving the collection and reporting of data to further identify best practices for campuses to model, requiring LGBT issues liaisons at campuses and by adding sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression to campus anti-discrimination policies on harassment, intimidation, and bullying in their student codes of conduct.

**AB 668: Religious Accommodations for CSU Examinations**

AB 668 defines undue hardship in the Education Code which allows CSU students to reschedule examinations at an alternate time if the scheduled time violates the student's religious creed, unless it causes an undue hardship for the university. This amendment would provide clarity to students, faculty, and administrators as well as promote religious freedoms.

**AB 670: CSU Appeals Process**

AB 670 ensures that each campus of the California State University has a clear appeals process for students who are denied admission. This measure seeks to make sure that applicants who are denied admission are notified of the campus appeals process, how long they have to appeal and ensure that each campus lists their appeals process on their websites so interested parties can access that information.

**AB 743: Community College Assessment Program**

AB 743 increases the efficiency of community college student assessments by establishing a statewide common assessment system to ensure that students are properly placed. It also improves student success by offering students a pre-test component which allows them to practice and prepare before taking their assessments.

**AB 795: College Campus Smoking Policy Enforcement**

AB 795 gives authority to any California Community College (CCC), California State University (CSU), and University of California (UC) to enforce state, local and system-wide smoking and tobacco laws, regulations and policies by issuing fines, under \$100.

**AB 1013: Private Post-Secondary Technical Clean-up**

AB 1013 provides for two technical changes to the Private Postsecondary Education Act of 2009, enacted by AB 48. The bill allows the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education to authorize subject specific ability-to-benefit tests, if a relevant U.S. Department of Education-approved test is not available. The bill also corrects a technical error regarding refund calculations.

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### **K-12 Education**

#### **AB 680: School Safety Plans**

AB 680 helps keep school children, faculty and staff safe by clarifying that sensitive elements of a school safety plan that include sensitive tactical response strategies to deadly attacks are exempt from disclosure to the public. The information that may be withheld is limited to tactical response plans which could compromise the ability of law enforcement and school staff to protect school children if there is a shooting on campus or other sort of attack that may result in death or serious bodily injury. In these instances, if the information falls into the hands of the wrong persons, the safety of children and staff is compromised. The measure was sponsored by the San Diego Unified School District.

#### **AB 1304: Linked Learning**

AB 1304 authorizes the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing to form a work group for the purposes of defining and issuing a “recognition of study”. This “recognition of study” acknowledges a completed field of study in linked learning, the linking of career paths to rigorous academic coursework, competence for holders of an appropriate single-subject teaching credential.

### **Public Health**

#### **AB 1194: Updating the California Safe Water Drinking Act**

AB 1194 conforms existing statutes related to drinking water to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) standards. Some of California’s laws fail to comply with the federal SDWA, placing the state at risk of loss of significant federal funds to create and maintain public water systems.

### **Good Government/Elections**

#### **AB 503: Counting Every Vote**

AB 503 permits votes for qualified write-in candidates to be counted in certain circumstances if the intent of the voter can be determined, even if the voter did not mark the “bubble” next to the write-in space on a ballot.

#### **AB 684: Conforming Community College Trustee Elections to CA Voting Rights Act**

AB 684 authorizes trustee area elections for California Community College Districts who pass a resolution locally and then seek and obtain approval from the State Board of Governors. This will insure compliance with state election laws and oversight at the state level. AB 684 also changes the manner of election of trustees for the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District to by-trustee areas from five different sub-districts rather than the current manner of five at-large seats elected from anywhere within the District’s boundary.